

Sanitized Copy Approved for  
Release 2009/12/03 :  
CIA-RDP85T00875R00100001

Sanitized Copy Approved for  
Release 2009/12/03 :  
CIA-RDP85T00875R00100001

~~SECRET~~



ILLEGIB

**DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE**

# Intelligence Report

**THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION AND THE**

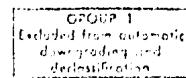
**NINTH PARTY CONGRESS**

**(Reference Title: POLO XXXVIII)**

**SECRET**  
**RSS No. 0040/69**  
**1 October 1969**

## WARNING

This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States, within the meaning of Title 18, sections 793 and 794, of the US Code, as amended. Its transmission or revelation of its contents to or receipt by an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.



**SECRET**

**THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION AND THE NINTH PARTY CONGRESS**

**MEMORANDUM TO RECIPIENTS:**

In time, the long-awaited Ninth Party Congress of the Chinese Communist Party may come to be regarded as a watershed in the political scene. The Congress did clarify certain points, such as the dominant role and authority of the militant Maoists at the peak of party leadership, the failure of Mao after three years of effort to achieve the primary goals of his Cultural Revolution, and his apparent determination to persist in the effort. However, the Party Congress raised as many questions as it answered and, at this point in time, the analyst is left a new layer of ambiguities to deal with.

This is one of a series of SRS studies based on continuing surveillance of the China scene. It was produced solely by the Special Research Staff; the research analyst responsible for its preparation is

The study was reviewed by analysts in the Office of Current Intelligence and the Office of National Estimates; both offices are in agreement with its general thrust and findings.

25X1

25X1

Chief, DD/I Special Research Staff

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

**THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION AND THE NINTH PARTY CONGRESS**

**Contents**

	<u>Page</u>
<b>Summary</b> . . . . .	i
<b>The Cultural Revolution and the Ninth Party Congress</b> . . . . .	1
<b>Construction: The First Attempt (January-August 1967)</b> . . . . .	3
<b>Construction: The Second Attempt (September 1967-July 1968)</b> . . . . .	10
<b>Construction: The Third Attempt (August 1968-March 1969)</b> . . . . .	20
<b>The Ninth Party Congress</b> . . . . .	31
<b>Prospects</b> . . . . .	38

**SECRET**

**SECRET****THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION AND THE NINTH PARTY CONGRESS****Summary**

For those who looked to the Ninth Party Congress to provide answers to basic questions about the future of Communist China, this first national congress of the Chinese Communist Party to be held in eleven years was a major disappointment. Whether viewed in terms of the new Party leadership, the new Party structure, or the course of future political and economic policy, the published record of the Congress was generally vague and contradictory. Because of the ambiguous character of the evidence, one's view of developments at the Congress is bound to be colored by one's view of developments preceding the Congress, indeed by one's view of the Cultural Revolution as a whole.

Organization of the Congress which finally convened on 1 April 1969 appears to have been controlled from the top. As Hsieh Fu-chih had revealed in a speech in October 1967, the plan was to organize the Congress "from the top downward" by having the Party Center select those who would attend.

More important than this in appraising the new Party organs is the character of the men selected to lead them. The composition of the Politburo Standing Committee, by far the most important Party organ, demonstrates graphically the continued domination of the top Party leadership by Maoist radicals. Consisting of just five men (Mao, Lin Piao, Chou En-lai, Ch'en Po-ta and K'ang Sheng), this Standing Committee is similar to the one formed at the outset of the Cultural Revolution and, in its composition, places control over the conduct of the Party's daily and most important affairs in the hands of militant Maoists by a margin of four to one.

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

Less clear cut and therefore susceptible to divergent interpretation is the character of the full 25-member Politburo "elected" on 28 April at the first plenary session of the new Central Committee. It is possible to conclude, for example, that the most important characteristic of this new Politburo is the greater representation accorded the People's Liberation Army, a development signifying (according to this view) a shift in the balance of power in the Politburo in favor of proponents of relative "moderation" in domestic and foreign policy. An equally tenable interpretation of the addition of these military leaders to the Politburo, however, is that it reflects an expansion in the power and influence of Lin Piao in this leading Party organ.

An even more difficult question is judging the political complexion of the new, much larger Central Committee "elected" at the Congress. The central issue concerns the character of those military leaders who already dominate the provincial Revolutionary Committee structure and who now comprise over forty percent of the new Central Committee. On this point, the evidence is also mixed and does not support a clear-cut judgment.

There is convincing proof, on the one hand, of Mao's and Lin's dissatisfaction with the initial performance of the People's Liberation Army in the Cultural Revolution in the fact that roughly half of the Military Region and Military District Commands were purged and reorganized in 1967. Even after this large-scale reorganization and the selection of new military commanders to positions of leadership in the provincial Revolutionary Committee structure, the performance of a number of these replacements was subjected to severe criticism in the anti-Rightist campaign spearheaded by Madame Mao in the spring of 1968. These military commanders, however characterized, could hardly meet the criteria laid down by Lin Piao in August 1966 for the selection of new Party leaders--that they eagerly studied the thought of Mao Tse-tung, attached great importance to political-ideological work and were filled with revolutionary zeal.

**SECRET**

On the other hand, the PLA has discharged its role as the main executer of policy during the Cultural Revolution and as the whipping-boy for problems resulting from that policy with remarkable discipline and obedience. With the possible exception of the Wuhan Incident, there is no known instance of local military commanders directly defying orders from Peking, orders which frequently resulted in subjecting them to physical attack and humiliating abuse at the hands of the Red Guards. When mistakes have been made, they have either been mistakes of omission or the result of a natural tendency to interpret ambiguous directives so as to minimize disorder and safeguard their own positions. On balance, then, it appears that these military leaders at the regional and provincial levels to whom important Party and government functions have been assigned, should be characterized as essentially loyal to Mao.

Despite the general impression of uncertainty conveyed by the published record of the Ninth Party Congress, there is good reason to believe that the Maoist leadership intends to persevere in the face of great odds toward the achievement of the original goals of the Cultural Revolution. An appraisal of progress to date in achieving these goals demonstrates that there is a considerable distance to go.

The undertaking to achieve the final goal--the creation of "revolutionary successors"--has in some ways been the most frustrating and least successful. At the very top, Lin Piao of course is now in place as Mao's successor, but there is considerable doubt both about Lin's health and his ability to endure after Mao is gone. Although the Politburo is weighted with handpicked supporters, few if any of these are both talented and youthful enough to take over when the present generation goes. It is at provincial and lower levels, however, where the failure to identify and promote to positions of leadership Mao's "revolutionary Leftist" supporters has been most apparent.

**SECRET**

The strange fact that after three years of turmoil and violence in the Cultural Revolution the Chinese Communist Party is still largely inoperative outside of Peking can be explained in various ways. One explanation is that Mao, at least in the early period, did not intend to reconstruct the Party, or at least restore it to its former position of centrality in the political structure. Another is that Mao has been thwarted in his plan to rebuild the Party by opposition within the military and the old Party and government apparatus.

A third, related explanation is that the primary cause for this snail's pace in Party building is a continuing fear by the Maoist leadership in Peking of a "restoration of the old," of a revival of the pre-Cultural Revolution "bureaucratic" Party apparatus staffed by unrepentant and unredeemed cadres. Until such time as sufficient "new blood" ("new cadres") is brought into the leadership, it appears that the Party will continue to lead a shadowy, ghost-like existence at provincial and local levels of the new structure of power.

**SECRET**

## **THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION AND THE NINTH PARTY CONGRESS**

"There is no construction without destruction . . . Destruction means criticism and repudiation, it means revolution. It involves reasoning things out, which is construction. Put destruction first, and in the process you have construction." -- Mao Tse-tung, Quoted in "Circular of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China," 16 May 1966.

In his keynote political report to the Ninth Party Congress, Lin Piao discussed at some length the history of the "great proletarian cultural revolution" from its formal inception at a May 1966 Central Committee work conference to its nominal conclusion at the Party Congress in April 1969. Although he listed the objectives of the Cultural Revolution as ideological, political and economic in character, Lin stressed that "the fundamental question in the current great revolution" is "the question of political power, a question of which class holds leadership."

Mao Tse-tung's fundamental purpose in launching the Cultural Revolution, then, was to seek out and destroy his opponents within the Party and government, and replace them with loyal and dedicated supporters. As suggested in the quotation cited above, Mao expected that the Cultural Revolution would serve to identify his opponents and supporters by their conduct in the "destructive" phase of revolutionary struggle, and thus prepare the way for "construction" of a new revolutionary order. What actually happened, however, as Lin Piao revealed in his political report, was that the Cultural Revolution produced "an extremely complicated situation" in which (quoting Mao) it was "hard" to distinguish "between ourselves and the enemy."

Inaccurate as it may be as a description of reality, Mao's formulation of the dialectical relationship between "destruction" and "construction" does provide an important

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

clue for understanding the tumultuous course of the Cultural Revolution over the past three years. It helps to explain, for example, the pattern of periods of disorder ("destruction") followed by periods of relative order ("construction"). It helps to explain, in the priority accorded "destruction," why the "constructive" phases have been short-lived, as Mao and his more radical advisers have discovered new opponents (or at least less than enthusiastic supporters) occupying positions of authority in the new revolutionary structure of power.

Finally, it helps to explain two paradoxical and puzzling features of Lin Piao's political report to the Ninth Party Congress. First, Lin appears to be saying at one and the same time that the Cultural Revolution is over ("a great victory" has been won in exposing and destroying "the bourgeois headquarters headed by the renegade, hidden traitor and scab Liu Shao-ch'i"), and is not over ("the revolution is not yet over . . . in the realm of the superstructure"). The second puzzling feature was Lin's meandering discussion of Party building which, together with surrounding commentary and post-Congress developments, strongly suggested that the task of reconstructing the Chinese Communist Party as the "core of political power" at intermediate and basic levels of society was just getting under way.

The strange fact that after three years of turmoil and violence in the Cultural Revolution the Chinese Communist Party is still largely inoperative outside of Peking can be explained in various ways. One explanation is that Mao, at least in the early period of the "January Revolution" and the short-lived experiment with the Paris Commune and its replacement by the Revolutionary Committee, did not intend to reconstruct the Party, or at least restore it to its former position of centrality in the political structure. Another is that Mao has been thwarted in his plan to rebuild the Party by opposition within the military and the old Party and government apparatus.

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

A third, related explanation is that the primary cause for this protracted delay in Party building is a continuing fear by the Maoist leadership in Peking of a "restoration of the old" (i.e., restoring power to the same old "bureaucrats" who had dominated the Party before the Cultural Revolution). On each occasion when tentative steps have been taken to restore the authority of the Party, Mao has drawn back because of this fear. It is Mao Tse-tung's long drawn-out and still largely unsuccessful effort to construct a new Party composed of loyal and enthusiastic "revolutionary successors" which provides the central theme of this paper.

**Construction: The First Attempt (January-August 1967)**

"With the Commune inaugurated, do we still need the Party? I think we need it because we must have a hard core, whether it is called the Communist Party or a social democratic party . . . In short, we still need a party." -- Mao Tse-tung, Quoted in a Speech by Chang Ch'un-ch'iao, 24 February 1967.

In January 1967, the Cultural Revolution was suddenly transformed from an effort to reform the existing structure of power into an all-out assault against the power structure itself. Whereas Mao earlier (at an October 1966 Central Committee work conference) had expressed confidence that "the majority" of "Party cadres" would "understand" (and only "a few oppose") the Cultural Revolution, he was forced to concede in late January that "most old cadres still do not understand the Cultural Revolution" and to call for the overthrow of the Party and government apparatus which they controlled. Understandably alarmed by this display of resistance, Mao reacted by inciting the "revolutionary masses" to "seize power from below" and by authorizing the creation on an experimental basis of a new revolutionary organ of power modeled after the Paris Commune.

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

It appears in retrospect that one of the motives prompting this experiment was to provide a Marxist-Leninist rationale for the "January Revolution," portrayed by Mao as "the seizure of power by one class from another." Also, as Ch'en Po-ta pointed out in a 24 January 1967 speech, the Paris Commune provided an organizational form through which "the workers, soldiers, peasants, students and traders" could unite and coordinate their efforts in "seizing power." At the same time, the Paris Commune symbolized an important objective of Mao Tse-tung in launching the Cultural Revolution--that of involving the masses more directly and actively in the political process as expressed in the concept of "developing extensive democracy under the dictatorship of the proletariat." As expounded by Lin Piao in a major speech of 3 November 1966, this new revolutionary practice "provided the people with full democratic rights along the principles of the Paris Commune," including the right "to criticize and supervise the Party and government leading institutions and leaders at all levels."

Although the experiment with the Paris Commune was short-lived and confined largely to the stage of "seizure of power," it symbolized Mao's deep suspicion and distrust of the "old" Party and government, and as such would have a lasting and disturbing effect upon the undertaking to build a new political structure. As a new expression of his "mass-line" approach to politics, Mao's flirtation with the Paris Commune concept revealed an intent to look outside the existing "bureaucratic" structure for a new source of power and support in the ongoing political process, an intent to use the "revolutionary masses" and their representatives as a check and balance on the representatives of the "old" establishment in whatever might materialize as the new revolutionary organ of power of the Cultural Revolution.

It is important to note, however, as the quotation cited above makes clear, that Mao did not intend that the "revolutionary rebels" who had risen at his command to "seize power" should actually exercise the power they

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

had seized. As indicated earlier, "extensive democracy" in the new revolutionary order was to be carried on under "the dictatorship of the proletariat" and even in the Commune it was necessary, as Mao emphasized, to have a "hard core" of leadership represented by "a party." Of additional interest in this quotation is Mao's almost contemptuous reference to "the Communist Party" as only one among a number of different possible "parties." This curious statement reflects both Mao's bitter experience with the old "Communist Party" which had turned against him and a determination to reorganize this Party drastically before restoring it to a position of dominance in the new revolutionary order.

It was also envisaged from the outset that a reformed Party would lead the Revolutionary Committee, the new "provisional" organ of revolutionary power established in early 1967 to replace the abortive Commune. As is now well known, the Revolutionary Committee consists of a 'three-way alliance' of representatives of the "revolutionary masses" (the Red Guards and "revolutionary rebels"), representatives of the People's Liberation Army (ordered in late January to intervene in the Cultural Revolution in support of the "revolutionary Left"), and "revolutionary Party cadres" (defined as "those leading cadres who follow the proletarian revolutionary line represented by Chairman Mao.") As depicted in an authoritative Red Flag editorial at this time, these "revolutionary cadres" were to serve as "the nucleus or backbone" of the Revolutionary Committee. It was in keeping with this concept that the leadership of one of the earliest provincial Revolutionary Committees (that of Shansi) was vested in a "Party Nucleus Group," a practice described in the organizational regulations of this committee as "accepting the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party provincial level organization in Shansi."

The role of the representatives of "revolutionary mass organizations" was undoubtedly an important one in the eyes of Mao Tse-tung, providing the "revolutionary" and "representative" characteristics which he demanded

**SECRET**

of these new governing bodies. That this role was not one of leadership, however, was emphasized by Mao in an instruction at this time that the youthful rebels and Red Guards were "not to take over at once the duties of the secretaries of the provincial Party committee or municipal Party committee." Rather, the "three-way combination" was a mechanism which would provide "very good training," so that after "7, 8 or 10 years" of learning from "the old revolutionary cadres" they could then qualify as "secretaries of the provincial Party committee . . ."

As experience would soon demonstrate, Mao's original conception of the Revolutionary Committee was filled with contradictions and pitfalls. The first of these was that, in the absence of clear-cut guidance, PLA units would somehow be able to identify "revolutionary Leftists" whom they were to "support" in the formation of the new Revolutionary Committees. The second was the provision that the "leaders of the revolutionary mass organizations" must be "truly representative of the great revolutionary masses," thus placing a premium on factional struggle between these organizations to determine which should have dominant representation in the Revolutionary Committee. The last, described in early February as "the biggest problem now," was finding "revolutionary leading cadres" who could persuade both the Maoist leadership at the Center and the "revolutionary rebels" in the provinces of their loyalty, and thus provide the expertise and experience necessary to make the new revolutionary organ of power work.

It was unfortunate for the future development and viability of the Revolutionary Committee that at just this point in time there occurred what has come to be known as "the adverse February current." The alleged ringleader of this "counterrevolutionary current" in Peking was Vice-Premier and Politburo Member T'an Chen-lin who, it was later charged, stood up in a Central Committee work conference in mid-February to direct such provocative questions to the Cultural Revolution Group as: "Do you still want Party leadership . . . old cadres . . . the People's Liberation Army . . . and production?" More

**SECRET**

concretely, T'an, together with a number of other Party and government leaders, was charged with engaging in the practice of "false power seizure," whereby senior Party cadres or revived Party committees had reinstated all or most of the old systems of control, at the same time ignoring or suppressing the opinions of the "revolutionary Left." The fact that this phenomenon of "false power seizure" or "restoration of the old" had also occurred in the great majority of China's provinces persuaded Mao that the great revolutionary enterprise of "seizing power" initiated during the January Revolution had largely failed and to look for reasons for this failure.

Each of the components of the "three-way alliance" was held responsible. The PLA was indicted not only for failure to "support the Left" but in certain provinces for colluding with old Party cadres to suppress the "revolutionary Left" and, as a result, was stripped of all real authority (in a 6 April Military Affairs Committee directive) in dealing with "revolutionary mass organizations." Somewhat paradoxically, it was at just about this time (in March) that the Army was ordered to establish military control committees and thereby assume responsibility for exercising "the provincial leadership power" until such time as new Revolutionary Committees approved by the Center (i.e., genuine "power seizures") could be created.

To a lesser extent, the ranks of the "revolutionary Left" were also held responsible, for instead of forming a "great alliance" as instructed in the early stages of the "seize power" movement in January, they had split into rival factions and, motivated largely by self-interest, had engaged in a violent struggle for power. The remedy for this was to launch in early April a new political and ideological campaign against Liu Shao-chi and his supporters in "each area, department and unit" throughout the country, with this struggle against a common target serving, it was thought, to unify and strengthen the ranks of Mao's "proletarian revolutionaries."

By far the greatest culprit held responsible for derailing the January Revolution, however, was the third component of the "three-way alliance"--that of the

**SECRET**

"revolutionary leading cadre" symbolized by T'an Ch'en-lin. The realization that his new revolutionary organs of power had been taken over by the same old type of Party cadre who had opposed him in the past must have provided a profound shock to Mao. Instead of a "core of leadership" infinitely loyal and filled with revolutionary zeal, Mao was confronted with the prospect of a "restoration of the old," a specter which would haunt him and his Cultural Revolution Group advisers in the months to come. Indeed, it appears in retrospect that the shock Mao experienced at this time led him to extend considerably the original timetable he had set for the Cultural Revolution, and to postpone indefinitely his plan to revive the Party as the nucleus of leadership in the new revolutionary structure of power.

Mao's new attitude toward the Party came through clearly in a speech made to a Central work conference in late April. Whereas in earlier pronouncements (e.g., the 8 August 1966 Central Committee decision on the Cultural Revolution) the "main target" of the revolution had been defined as a "handful of . . . counterrevolutionary revisionists," Mao in this speech seemed to expand the target to encompass the Party as a whole. Stating that "since 1952 we [I.e., the Party] have become divorced from the masses" because of the adoption of such revisionist practices as "rank differentiation in the army . . . and the wage payment system," Mao asserted that "the masses do not want a too hasty recovery of the Party" and that therefore "we might wait half a year or even a year before restoring this organization." What is more, this period of six months to a year would be used to "test" not only Party leaders but also large numbers of ordinary members of the Party who had succumbed to the bad influence of Liu Shao-ch'i. Because of the poor performance of so many elder Party cadres and members in the Cultural Revolution, Mao also stressed in this speech the necessity of bringing more young people into the new revolutionary organs, calling for a new three-way alliance of "old-middle-aged-and young."

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

The first attempt to construct a new revolutionary organ of power had failed because those who had stepped forward to lead these organs turned out to be, in Mao's eyes, the same old unredeemed and unrepentant cadres who had controlled the Party before the Cultural Revolution. It was necessary to initiate a new destructive phase of the revolution, to unleash the "revolutionary masses" to engage in struggle and criticism in order to dig out Mao's opponents still concealed in "each area, department and unit" throughout the country. But whereas the injunction "trust the masses" and "don't be afraid of disorder" in the 8 August 1966 decision inaugurating the Cultural Revolution had been directed at the civilian authorities, it was now directed at the People's Liberation Army which in late March had been ordered to replace the largely defunct Party and government apparatus. As noted above, this injunction

restricted the Army to the use of "persuasion and education" and specifically forbade the use of force in dealing with "mass organizations." At the same time, the Army was held responsible for the creation of "true proletarian revolutionary great alliances" and of revolutionary "three-way alliances" at the provincial and local levels, a task for which (despite its high degree of politicization) it was ill-prepared.

25X1

There was in these ill-conceived instructions an invitation to increased antagonism and conflict between the Army and the "revolutionary Left" in the months that followed. The events of this new "destructive" phase extending through the summer of 1967 are well known and will not be discussed here. It is sufficient to point out that the Wuhan Incident in mid-July (viewed in Peking as an act of insubordination by leaders of the Wuhan Military Region Command) and the ensuing decision to arm selected Red Guard and "revolutionary rebel" units as a counterforce brought China by the end of August to the brink of anarchy. There was no choice for Mao but to heed the counsel of his more moderate advisers, apply the brakes, assess the damage and initiate a new "constructive" phase in the Cultural Revolution.

**SECRET**

**SECRET****Construction: The Second Attempt (September 1967-July 1968)**

"We must guard against both the 'Left' and the Right. To guard against the 'Left' means to prevent interference with . . . Chairman Mao's latest directives. To guard against the Right means to prevent conservative groups from reversing previous verdicts on them." -- Lin Piao, Instruction to Party Committee of the Air Force, Winter 1968.

Confronted with a damaged economy, a disturbed Army, a breakdown of Party and government machinery and the consequent threat of anarchy, Mao Tse-tung was forced in September 1967 to call a halt to the destructive, mass phase of his Cultural Revolution and press ahead with the construction of a new government and Party apparatus. Reacting to the threat of anarchy posed by the "Left" (i.e., the "ultra-Leftist" Red Guards), Mao issued a "great strategic plan" in September consisting of a series of "supreme instructions" designed to restore order from below by disciplining and reorganizing the "revolutionary ranks" and to restore order from above by speeding up the establishment of a new governmental structure. But, as Mao and his more radical advisers probably feared from the outset, this plan and the means employed to implement it, soon produced a situation in which an equal if not graver threat was perceived from the Right--a situation in which "conservative groups" or individuals would attempt to "reverse previous verdicts" and attempt once more to subvert the goals of the Cultural Revolution by threatening a "restoration of the old."

The immediate and inescapable problem in September was to deal with the phenomenon of "ultra-Leftism" in which militant Red Guards, incited by official propaganda and high-ranking officials, had launched a wide-ranging assault against the People's Liberation Army. This, as Madame Mao explained, had of course been a "mistake," but a mistake attributable primarily to "bad elements"

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

who had sneaked into the leadership of these "revolutionary mass organizations."

Another manifestation of this phenomenon was "factionalism," a problem which had bedeviled the Cultural Revolution from the outset and to which Mao now turned his attention. Assigned major responsibility for this, radical Red Guard organizations in Peking were charged by top leaders with spreading "factionalism" into the ranks of the workers, and, significantly, the "working class" for the first time was assigned "the leading position" in the new constructive phase of the revolution because of its higher sense of organization and discipline. What is more, another instruction by Chairman Mao given wide publicity in mid-October seemed to call for the dissolution of the mass "proletarian revolutionary organizations" by calling for the formation of "revolutionary great alliances on the basis of trade, profession, department or class in school." As pointed out in a 19 October People's Daily editorial explaining this instruction, revolutionary mass organizations were no longer needed because a "decisive victory" had been won in the "struggle against the handful of Party persons in authority taking the capitalist road," the purpose for which these mass organizations had been originally established.

The force of this instruction, however, was largely vitiated by another which Mao apparently issued soon thereafter. [ ] an important proviso in the program to set up "revolutionary great alliances" was that the "revolutionaries" be dominant. As a precautionary measure, local authorities were now instructed to "avoid dissolving [mass] organizations as a means of bringing about revolutionary great alliances" in order to "guard against conservative forces devouring the revolutionaries." 25X1

It soon became apparent, moreover, that Mao had changed his mind and was now intent upon retaining the Red Guards and "revolutionary rebels" as a force in being to resist and offset an anticipated threat from the Right ("conservative forces") in the winter of 1967. For although the Red Guards were to undergo a course of

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

"rectification" and "ideological education" featuring "self-criticism" for past mistakes, the Army was specifically enjoined, in conducting this course, from using force or suppressing "revolutionary mass organizations," and instead, directed "to rely on the revolutionary masses" in these organizations to expose and deal with "the handful of bad persons" held responsible for "factionalism" in the ranks of the "revolutionary Left."

Apparently determined to give the Red Guards a second chance to qualify as "revolutionary successors," Mao issued still another directive in early December which called for "correct treatment of veteran rebels" who had made mistakes in accordance with the principle of "help, criticism and alliance," warning the PLA to "never put pressure on them" and demanding that seats be reserved for some of them in the new Revolutionary Committee structure. It remained for the Chairman of the Kweichow Revolutionary Committee Li Tsai-han to spell out the implications of these directives--that the "merits" of these "veteran rebels" were considered greater than their "mistakes" and that the Red Guard "little generals" were still regarded as "a revolutionary force protecting Chairman Mao's revolutionary line."

It is likely, moreover, that Mao was more concerned in the fall of 1967 about the "mistakes" committed by the other main protagonist in the violent upheaval of the preceding summer--the leaders of the PLA at the military region and military district levels of command. In his published statements, Mao asserted that most of these "mistakes" had been unintentional, caused by lack of "education" and "experience," and to help correct this deficiency, "training classes" for senior military cadres from the provinces were held in Peking throughout the remainder of the year. At the same time, the fact that Mao and Lin felt impelled in 1967 to purge and reorganize nearly half of these regional and district military commands was convincing proof of dissatisfaction with the performance of the PLA since it was ordered in late March to take over the functions of government at

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

provincial and local levels.\*

Reflecting this dissatisfaction with the performance of the military, the final and perhaps most important "instruction" conveyed by Chairman Mao in September was that the process of setting up Revolutionary Committees in all the 29 provinces and major cities of China be speeded up and completed by the end of January 1968. To meet this deadline, it was no longer possible to rely on the long drawn-out and generally unsuccessful method of "seizure of power" from below. Instead, it was necessary to impose solutions from above, hammering out agreements between representatives of the Army, revolutionary leading cadres and revolutionary mass organizations assembled in Peking in accordance with Mao's directive "to solve the problems of various provinces one by one."

Despite this reassertion of centralized control, it is important to note that the composition and membership of these new Revolutionary Committees could not be arbitrarily decreed from above but had to be approved by all three components comprising these committees, including the representatives of the two "factions" in each province who continued to wrangle over the share of power to be allotted each. A major obstacle was the requirement that both factions approve the senior Party cadres whom Mao, in still another of his instructions, had ordered "liberated." There was an urgent need, as explained in an authoritative 21 October People's Daily editorial, for more "revolutionary cadres" who, because of their "richer experience . . . better organizing and working ability and higher understanding of policy," could "serve as the

---

\*Reorganization of the local military command structure was reported in the following provinces in 1967: Anhwei, Chekiang, Honan, Hopeh, Hunan, Hupeh, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Kiangsi, Shensi, Szechwan and Tsinghai. The more important of these changes occurred after the Wuhan Incident.

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

core and backbone in the revolutionary provisional organs of power"--the Revolutionary Committees. As a result of the delay imposed by this time-consuming process, however, only seven additional provinces and major cities had succeeded in establishing these committees by or near the time of the Spring Festival.

Mao's decision in September 1967 to resurrect the Party was directly related, it is believed, to this felt need to recruit experienced civilian cadres to "serve as the core and backbone" of the new Revolutionary Committees, and thus bring to an end the situation of the preceding eight months in which, as Chou En-lai put it in a speech at this time, the PLA had been "charged with the monistic leadership of the Party, the government and the Army." Although this initial effort to rectify and rebuild the Party was largely unsuccessful, the policy directives and editorial discussion at this time provide important clues for understanding major issues concerning the Party which remain unresolved today. For example, concerning the knotty problem of the relationship between the rebuilt Party and the Revolutionary Committee, Yao Wen-yuan stated unequivocally at this time (in a 11 October report to Mao) that a "Party leadership nucleus" or "core group" was to be created within each Revolutionary Committee to provide Party leadership over the new revolutionary organ of power.

At the same time, it was made quite clear that this concept of a "Party core group" was not to be implemented immediately, but rather pursued as a long-range goal. An important prerequisite stipulated by Mao at this time was that "this core should not be set up subjectively or be self-appointed, but should be formed naturally in struggle and developed in struggle"--that is, that the Party cadres comprising these core groups continue to be tested by their performance in the Cultural Revolution to ensure their loyalty before being entrusted with real power. Until such time as Mao and his principal advisers could feel reasonably confident that these new Party organs were controlled by loyal Maoists, it was emphasized (for example, in an important Hsieh Fu-chih speech of 26 October on Party rectification) that the newly revived

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

Party organs would "not play a leading role in the Revolutionary Committee" and that "the time of establishing the relations of leadership" would "be mentioned later."

Hsieh's speech also revealed an intent to organize the forthcoming Ninth Party Congress "from the top downward," to have the Party Center select those who would attend in order "to ensure that the rebels among Party members [*i.e.*, Mao's supporters] will be in a majority." 25X1

The further requirement that members of the "core group" must also be members of the Revolutionary Committee (presumably leading members) underlined the intimate, symbiotic relationship between these new Party and government organs, and was justified on the grounds that "the better Party members were already chosen to serve on the Revolutionary Committees."

Most of the contradictory elements in the relationship between the "Party core group" and the Revolutionary Committee seen today originated in this early formative period of Party construction. First, although it was clear that the Party was to assume the dominant position of leadership at some future date, actual leadership in the interim was to be exercised by the Revolutionary Committee. As suggested in a Shanghai Liberation Daily editorial at this time, one reason Mao continued to show preference for the Revolutionary Committee was that it afforded "advanced elements of the proletariat" who had emerged in the Cultural Revolution an opportunity to occupy "positions of leadership," individuals who "though not Party members . . . in essence play the role of Party members . . ." As this same editorial revealed, moreover, the initial experiments in Shanghai in recruiting new party members had not gone according to plan. Instead of applying Mao's revolutionary line in party building to recruit members imbued with "revolutionary combat

**SECRET**

spirit," some Party organs had rejected these candidates as "trouble makers" and admitted instead those who were "good in production." And with the disclosure in early 1968 by a Shanghai official that, because of the activity of "class enemies" ("Some bad men want to seize our Party power"), "no new Party members may be recruited" without specific authority from the Central Committee, the first attempt to revive and reconstruct the Party apparatus initiated in the fall of 1967 in effect came to a halt.

The return of the "class enemy" to center stage in March of 1968 marked the beginning of the third destructive phase of Mao's Cultural Revolution which would last until mid-year. Whereas the threat from the "Left" (the refusal of mass organizations to obey "Chairman Mao's latest directives" as manifested in continuing "factionalism" and "anarchism") had been depicted as the most serious problem in regime propaganda throughout the fall and winter, suddenly the Rightist threat of "conservative groups" seeking to "reverse previous verdicts" became the main danger. According to the logic of the Cultural Revolution, as earlier pointed out in a 7 January Wen Hui Pao editorial, "revolutionary and conservative factions" could only exist among the masses when "class enemies" still occupied positions of authority where they could "stir up trouble and discord . . ." In order to identify these "black backers," it would be necessary once again to test the performance of the new leadership at the Center and especially in the provinces by fomenting a new wave of revolutionary disorder.

The ringleaders of this new Rightist threat "to reverse correct verdicts" in Peking were identified, in a virulent attack led by Madame Mao, as Acting Chief of Staff Yang Ch'eng-wu, Peking Garrison Commander Fu Ch'ung-pi, and Air Force Political Commissar Yu Li-chin. The central role of the emotional and somewhat neurotic Madame Mao, credited as the first to sense and warn of the new Rightist danger, in the Yang-Yu-Fu affair is significant. For it appears in retrospect that a number of the charges leveled against Yang Ch'eng-wu were either fabricated or grossly exaggerated. One charge

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

that does ring true is that Yang and his military colleagues in Peking had not shown sufficient deference to the Madame and instead had "attempted to negate the influence of the Cultural Revolution Group." A similar complaint uttered by the Madame meeting with a series of delegation leaders from the provinces not long thereafter was that they too had been guilty of "not paying much attention to the Cultural Revolution Group."

Whatever the merit of specific charges, it was clear in the barrage of propaganda attacking Rightist reversal of verdicts, Right splitism, Rightist conservatism, Right capitulationism and Rightist restoration in the months that followed that Mao and his radical advisers were dissatisfied with the character and composition of at least some of the provincial Revolutionary Committees which had been so slowly and laboriously constructed in the preceding year. As perceived by the Maoists, they were faced with a revival of the "adverse February current" of a year earlier (depicted in the convoluted phraseology of the Cultural Revolution as an attempt "to reverse the correct verdict on the 'adverse February current'") in which senior Party cadres supported by military commanders had subverted the first great effort to establish new revolutionary organs of power by staging "false power seizures" and threatening to "restore the old." As had been true a year earlier, it was considered necessary to strengthen the position of the representatives of "revolutionary mass organizations" (viewed as the "revolutionary Left") in relation to the military and Party cadre representatives (viewed as prone to Rightist error) in the new three-way alliance.

One way to do this was to subject "revolutionary cadres" to another round of denunciation, charged with having engaged previously in "sham self-criticism" in order to regain their former positions of authority. As revealed in a speech by Chou En-lai at this time, a new tough policy was to be instituted whereby Party cadres would once again have to appear before the masses, admit error, and accept the criticism of the revolutionary masses. Military leaders in the Revolutionary Committee

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

system were also directed to engage in "self-criticism," both for permitting unrepentant Party cadres to return to positions of power in the new revolutionary organs and for allowing "conservative" mass organizations to make a comeback. Another way to rectify the imbalance in the three-way alliance structure was to order that more representatives of the mass organizations be appointed to the "leading groups" or "standing committees" of the new revolutionary organs of power.

The most important method of coping with the Rightist threat to the newly emerging structure of power, however, was once again to revive the "revolutionary mass movement" as an instrument for use in a large-scale purge or "purification of class ranks" initiated at this time. Incited by new Maoist instructions approving "proletarian revolutionary factionalism," Red Guards and "revolutionary rebels" erupted in an explosion of violence and disorder which would soon bring China once again to the brink of chaos.

Although the hope was expressed (in a 6 May Wen Hui Pao editorial) that this new revolutionary upsurge would serve to "consolidate" the new revolutionary organs of power, it soon became apparent that the practical application of the new slogan "give full play to the role of revolutionary mass organizations" was threatening the very existence of the Revolutionary Committee system. As more and more provinces began to report in May and June, "class enemies" from the "ultra-Left" were exploiting this slogan to revive "bourgeois factionalism," resume armed struggle and split the entire revolutionary structure of power from top to bottom. Reports from Shansi, for example, showed that the renewed outbreak of factional fighting there had created (in the words of Lin Piao) a "double-layer political regime," a situation characterized by a fundamental split between the Army and the Revolutionary Committee with each supporting a faction and in which (in the words of Chou En-lai) the Revolutionary Committee "existed in name only." More alarming were reports from Kwangsi, Hupeh and Yunnan at this time which revealed that factionalism had once again broken out within the military command structure.

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

Responding to this rising crescendo of violence, a Central Committee meeting on 13 June (at which Mao and Lin were reported as "highly concerned about the stability of the Army and the Revolutionary Committee" in Hupeh) issued the first of a series of directives ordering mass organizations in Kwangsi and other provinces to cease armed struggle, return all weapons stolen from the PLA and once again form "revolutionary great alliances." Confronted with the continuing refusal of these mass organizations to obey and with an ever expanding area of conflict and scale of destruction, Mao in late July (at a meeting attended symbolically by the leaders of the five most important revolutionary mass organizations) issued a nation-wide order authorizing the Army to put an end to armed struggle, dissolve the rebellious factions and in effect bring the era of the "revolutionary mass movement" in the Cultural Revolution to a close.

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

**Construction: The Third Attempt (August 1968-March 1969)**

"We should . . . unify our thinking, coordinate our steps, and act in concert under the unified leadership of the proletarian headquarters headed by Chairman Mao . . ." --Chou En-lai, Speech at 100,000 Strong Rally, September 7, 1968.

Initiated in August 1968, the third and presumably last attempt of Mao Tse-tung to construct a new revolutionary order is in many ways the most difficult phase of the Cultural Revolution to understand. Although generally constructive in character, it has been characterized by the introduction of a number of radical, inherently disruptive social and economic programs. Although highlighted by a thorough overhaul of the central Party leadership and organization, it has not provided the Party with a meaningful role at provincial and lower levels of government. Although devoted in large part to construction of a new civilian Party and government structure, it has recognized the dominant role of the military within this structure at the provincial level and thus posed a continuing threat to Mao Tse-tung's long-held principle that "the Party must control the gun." Finally, it has raised the difficult interpretive problem of deciding whether, in light of the developments during the period, Mao's Cultural Revolution should be considered at an end.

The decision in late July to dissolve the mass organizations of Red Guards and "revolutionary rebels" did bring to an end one of the most dramatic and prominent features of the Cultural Revolution--that of periodic outbreaks of revolutionary violence and chaos deemed necessary to ferret out "class enemies" hidden deeply in the bureaucratic structure. This decision, together with the speedy formation of the last five provincial Revolutionary Committees in August and early September, implied a willingness to settle for the existing power structure in the provinces. As Lin Piao would point out in his political report to the Ninth Party Congress, the establishment of

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

these Revolutionary Committees marked a "great decisive victory" with respect to "the fundamental question in the current great revolution...the question of political power ...of which class holds leadership."

In a series of important articles and editorials throughout August, Mao's somewhat belated discovery that "the working class" should play "the leading role" in the Cultural Revolution was explained in labored and unconvincing terms. That the Maoist leadership had become disenchanted with the Red Guards was clear, as evidenced by their indictment as "swell-headed" advocates of the theory of "many centers" (i.e., refusal to obey Mao's directives) and as "intellectuals" given to "endless quarreling" and "civil war," to "empty talk" and "the style of double dealing." As untrustworthy and unreliable "intellectuals," they would now have to undergo a process of "re-education" described (in the important Chou En-lai speech of 7 September cited above) as one of "responding to the call of our great leader Chairman Mao...settling in the mountainous areas and the countryside and taking part in physical work in factories, mines and villages." Intent upon reforming China's educational system by combining intellectual and physical labor (a long-held goal), Mao and his advisers had decided that the Red Guards had outlived their usefulness and that the time had come to send them by the millions to settle down permanently in the countryside.

By contrast, "the working class" was "most ready to accept Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tse-tung's thought" and had "the best understanding of the great significance of consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat." At a time when the dominant propaganda theme was the need to "unify our thinking, coordinate our steps and act in concert," it was the working class through the instrumentality of the "worker-peasant Mao Tse-tung's thought propaganda team" (the recipient of the much publicized "precious gift" of mangoes from Chairman Mao on 5 August) which in theory was to provide the leadership necessary to effect this unity of thought and action by the Chinese people. In fact, the composition of these propaganda teams (consisting not only of workers and peasants but, more importantly, of "PLA Commanders and fighters") and their subordination "under the

**SECRET**

**leadership of the Revolutionary Committees" (where again the military frequently dominated) meant that the new stage of "working class leadership" initiated in August 1968 was to a large extent leadership enforced by military control.**

Following the establishment of Revolutionary Committees in all the provinces of China, the Cultural Revolution (as pointed out in the joint editorial honoring National Day) "entered a new period...that of carrying out the tasks of struggle-criticism-transformation conscientiously." Although most observers have tended to view this as a constructive phase of "transforming" Chinese society in accordance with Maoist ideals, it is important to note that its call for "struggle and criticism" in every factory, commune, school and government department would trigger one last convulsive spasm of violence in a nationwide purge of basic levels of society. In a very real sense, the new stage of "struggle-criticism-transformation" initiated in September 1968 was no more than a re-direction of the Cultural Revolution to focus on basic-level units of Chinese society.

In contrast with the preceding period, however, this phase of the Cultural Revolution was to be both controlled (by worker propaganda teams directed by Revolutionary Committees) and expedited (carried out "conscientiously"). Although a violent wave of purging of "bad elements" in basic-level administrative units swept China in the fall of 1968, this essential first stage was soon brought to a halt and attention focused on the task of "transformation" defined (in the 8 August 1966 Central Committee decision on the Cultural Revolution) as "transforming education, literature and art and all parts of the superstructure that do not correspond to the socialist economic base, so as to facilitate the consolidation and development of the socialist system".

It was with a sense of urgency that the Maoist leadership in the fall of 1968 embarked upon this final stage of the Cultural Revolution in which China's institutional framework was to be radically reorganized ("transformed") in accordance with Mao Tse-tung's revolutionary

**SECRET**

vision of the good society. As already noted, one of Mao's important objectives in the revolution has been to effect a radical reform of the educational system, both to cleanse it of the corrupting influence of "bourgeois intellectuals and experts" and to transform it into a system combining intellectual and physical labor. The sending of teachers and students by the millions to labor in factories and communes in the fall of 1968 marked the first step in this educational revolution.

Soon swelling the ranks of this mass migration to the countryside were large numbers of urban cadres sent down (in accordance with a Maoist instruction in early October) as part of a sizable reduction in force of the government bureaucracy. This program, as an expression of Mao's well-known anti-bureaucratic bias (his preoccupation with preventing the growth of a privileged bureaucratic ruling group) was soon combined with another, much more ambitious program expressing what might be called Mao's anti-urban bias--namely, an undertaking to disperse all unemployed or underemployed urban residents ("city people divorced from labor") to "the front line of agricultural production." By means of these programs, it was planned to reduce the population of towns and cities (according to a number of reports by the end of the year) by as much as one third.

In addition to these large-scale, centrally-directed programs, a number of radical social and economic experiments reminiscent of the Great Leap Forward and commune period were introduced at this time on a trial basis. Reflecting the claim in the 1 October National Day editorial that this new stage of the Cultural Revolution would "consolidate and develop . . . China's socialist economic base," an undertaking to establish higher levels of socialization in agriculture, both in production and distribution, was reported in a number of provinces shortly after the Twelfth Plenum of the Central Committee was held in October. Suggesting that these reforms had in fact been discussed at this Party conference was a Kiangsi editorial of early December which asserted that the task of "expansion of communes and the merger of production brigades and teams" had been "successfully completed...in little more than a month...in

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

order to consolidate and strengthen the socialist collective economy." Another program initiated in various provinces at this time on an experimental basis was a campaign of learning from and emulating the model Ta-chai agricultural production brigade.

At first it appeared that the main purpose of this campaign was to popularize the well-known Ta-chai workpoint system, a system whereby peasant income is based not only on work performed but also on political attitude. It soon became apparent, however, that something more ambitious was involved in this campaign with the disclosure (in a 24 November People's Daily article) that Ta-chai in 1967 had begun to distribute food on the same basis used for awarding work points. This innovation, together with the fact that the politically advanced peasants at Ta-chai apparently do not have private plots, helps explain reports of a radical reorganization of China's commune system under way in late 1968 and early 1969.

The most striking of the new reforms reported at this time was the introduction of a "free supply" system under which farm families would receive a large portion of income in the form of "free" food, medical care and education and other basic services. In some instances, communes inaugurating this new system required that peasants surrender their private plots, and in others, there were plans to re-establish public mess-halls. The primary beneficiaries of this system would be poor peasant households, those with large numbers to feed but weak in labor power.

This attempt to introduce a "supply system" (which Mao in 1967 had endorsed as preferable to a wage payment system) would prove to be relatively short lived. The system by no stretch of the imagination could be called "free," since the value of food and other services supplied under it was then subtracted from the total wage bill (the amount distributed according to work points). As the earlier merger of production teams had penalized the more productive teams, so the present reforms served to penalize the more productive peasant households by reducing their income. Confronted with rising peasant discontent and with a threatened decrease in production, the Maoist

**SECRET**

leadership beat a hasty retreat in the spring of 1969, as disclosed in a key 22 March People's Daily editorial and a follow-up Liaoning Daily editorial (broadcast on 20 April) devoted to "spring farming."

What had happened, according to the editorial in People's Daily, was that the newly established Revolutionary Committees in various localities had misunderstood Mao's call to "learn from Ta-chai." They had failed to realize that "the most important thing" was "to learn from Ta-chai's revolutionary spirit and integrate it with local conditions" (i.e., ensure that innovations were acceptable to the peasants before implementing them). They had, in attempting to force these radical reforms on an unwilling peasantry, violated another Maoist principle revived to remedy the situation at this time--that of "taking account of the interests of the state, the collective and the individual" in rural work. Specifically, as pointed out in the Liaoning editorial, they had not realized that "commune members' private plots . . . are currently necessary for solving their problems of food and manure and at present still cannot be abolished." And, in a formulation which appeared to suspend further experimentation with the "supply system," this editorial also specified that calculation of peasant household income should be based on "the principle of distribution according to work and not on the number of household members."

If the radical reforms outlined above can be considered primarily social in character, it seems clear that this process of "transforming" China's social institutions was expected in time (in the words of Yao Wen-yuan in his August 1968 Red Flag article) to "greatly stimulate the development of the social productive forces." Although vague as to how and when this upsurge in production would materialize, Yao asserted that "many new things" were appearing on both the agricultural and industrial fronts and that a "vigorous technical revolution" was occurring in the midst of "an excellent and inspiring situation." Shortly thereafter, this situation was depicted (in the 1 October joint editorial in honor of National Day) as a "new leap forward situation on the industrial, agricultural, scientific and technological, and revolutionary art and literature fronts."

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

It was not long before, in accordance with this injunction to discover "many new things" appearing on the economic front, both the central and provincial press began to report a series of developments reminiscent of the Great Leap Forward. In the central press, the Peking General Knitwear Plant (selected as the model for implementation of the "struggle-criticism-transformation" campaign in industry) was widely publicized for its achievements in "applying the revolutionary enthusiasm" aroused in this campaign to production, thereby fulfilling its 1968 production plan two-and-a-half months ahead of schedule. In the provincial press, a whole series of editorials and articles revived the following prominent themes of the Great Leap Forward era: (1) criticism of the leadership at provincial and local levels for "right conservative thinking" in failing to recognize the potential for "a new upsurge in production;" (2) claims of technical innovations all over the country in industry (e.g., low alloy steel) and agriculture (e.g., rice transplanting machines); (3) provincial plans to achieve agricultural mechanization at a greatly accelerated pace (e.g., within three to five years in Honan); and (4) revival of large-scale water conservancy construction programs in a number of provinces as the means of securing large increases in agricultural production.

Even more reminiscent of the Great Leap Forward period was the reappearance at this time of unrealistic production targets, inflated by a process of escalating original targets to demonstrate revolutionary zeal. This occurred both in industry where "the workers" in individual plants began to insist that original production targets be increased by as much as 20 percent, and in agriculture where, for example, a 12 February 1969 Hunan broadcast revealed that 100 communes and brigades had raised earlier production goals to a proposed 15 to 20 percent increase in grain production and a 25 percent increase in total farm output. The second major characteristic of the Great Leap Forward era--the resort to fraudulent statistics--also began to reappear at this time, as in the claim that in the three-year period from 1966-1968 Heilungkiang Province had increased grain production 47 percent and industrial output 33 percent over the preceding 1963-1965 period.

**SECRET**

Demonstrating that the Maoist leadership had learned something from its earlier Great Leap Forward experience, a 21 February People's Daily editorial entitled "Grasp Revolution, Promote Production and Win New Victories on the Industry Front" signaled a sharp turn to a more moderate and realistic economic policy. In a sober discussion in which Leap Forward themes and terminology were conspicuously absent, the editorial reflected concern over lack of coordination in the national economy by calling for "planned and systematic" development "under a unified national plan." More important was the editorial's stress on a new Mao instruction to "see to it that there is enough leeway . . . in drawing up plans," designed to put an end to unrealistic planning by substituting more reasonable production targets which "the masses . . . through active efforts" could "reach or surpass." With the extension of these guidelines to cover agriculture (as revealed in the 22 March editorial on spring farming noted above), the first venture in attempting a Great Leap Forward type upsurge in economic activity as an essential, concluding phase of the Cultural Revolution had come to an end.

The last task in the "struggle-criticism-transformation" phase of the Cultural Revolution was rebuilding the Communist Party, a task taken up at an enlarged plenary session of the Central Committee (the 12th Plenum of the 8th Central Committee) held in Peking from the 13th to the 31st of October. According to the somewhat meager public record of the proceedings, the delegates attending this plenum (1) listened to "a most important speech" by Mao Tse-tung which characterized (somewhat defensively) "the current great proletarian cultural revolution" as "absolutely necessary and most timely;" (2) expelled Liu Shao-ch'i from the Party as a "renegade, traitor and scab" and (without legal authority) dismissed him as well from all posts "outside the Party;" (3) discussed a new draft Party Constitution; and (4) decided to convene the long-awaited Ninth Congress of the Communist Party "at an appropriate time."

Supplementing the terse discussion in the communique, a Red Flag editorial (entitled "Absorb Fresh Blood from the Proletariat--An Important Question in Party Consolidation")

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

published while the plenum was in session provided important guidelines to govern a new stage of intensified Party building, one of "eliminating waste" (i.e., purging) and "absorbing fresh blood" (i.e., recruiting) in order to convert the Party, as Mao had demanded, into "a vigorous vanguard organization...composed of the advanced elements of the proletariat..." The first of "two interrelated tasks" in "absorbing fresh blood" was of course recruiting new members, identified as "outstanding rebels, primarily advanced elements from among the industrial workers" who had demonstrated in the course of the Cultural Revolution a "strong sense of class struggle" and "firmness in opposing revisionism." The second part of this process--ensuring that admission of new members was controlled in each case by "a new leading body of a revolutionary three-in-one combination which resolutely carried out Chairman Mao's revolutionary line"--was of considerably greater interest.

The suggestion in this editorial that the Maoists in Peking were dissatisfied with the character of the new Party leadership organs which had begun to reappear at provincial and lower levels goes far to explain, it is believed, why the new phase of Party building initiated at this time would be so protracted and laborious. As spelled out in this and subsequent editorials in the Shanghai press, what had happened in a number of instances was that there had been a "restoration of the old," a phenomenon which had occurred twice before in early 1967 and in the winter of 1967-1968 when Mao had ordered the rehabilitation of Party cadres to provide needed administrative expertise. In this instance, it was charged that the new Party organs were "composed entirely of former personnel" who tended to apply Liu Shao-chi's revisionist line in Party building (i.e., recruit those who "observed discipline" and were "good at production") and find fault with and exclude "revolutionary rebels" who applied for Party membership. If this were permitted to continue, Mao's undertaking to convert the Party into "a militant, vigorous and vital organization of vanguards" would, as pointed out in a 19 October Wen Hui Pao editorial, come to naught.

**SECRET**

The remedy, according to a 25 October Wen Hui Pao editorial, was to "renew" these "leading groups" in the Party both by purging some of the old cadres and by recruiting a number of "new cadres" who would "resolutely defend Chairman Mao's revolutionary line." When it is remembered that these "leading groups" in the Party were often synonymous with the "leading groups" (i.e., "standing committees") of the Revolutionary Committees of which they were a part, it appears that another objective of this Party rectification campaign in the fall of 1968 was to expand the representation and enhance the role of "new cadres" (the representatives of the revolutionary masses) within the Revolutionary Committee system. Whatever the intent, the provincial press by December was reporting that "ultra-Leftist" rebels were exploiting the revolutionary slogan "oppose the restoration of the old" to once again attack worker propaganda teams, the PLA and the Revolutionary Committees.

The radical and disruptive "struggle-criticism-transformation" movement inaugurated in September 1968 had by the end of the year produced confusion and disorder at all levels of Chinese society. The dominant theme of the 1969 New Year's Day editorial was, therefore, the need for greater unity ("unified thinking, policies, plans, command, actions") as a prerequisite for fulfilling the three "glorious and arduous tasks of 1969"--holding the Ninth Party Congress, celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the founding of the Chinese People's Republic, and "achieving all-round victory" in the Cultural Revolution. In terms of the elastic concept of "democratic centralism" (also featured in this New Year's Day editorial), the emphasis now was to be placed on "centralism" as expressed in a series of moderating policy directives issued by Chairman Mao. In addition to the instructions in the editorial to damp down "class struggle," (e.g. "the target of attack must be narrowed and more people must be helped through education"), a new "proletarian policy on intellectuals" was introduced in February, one which held that "the majority" could be "re-educated" and redeemed. The extension of the new moderating trend to encompass the economy and society as a whole was then revealed in the key editorials in February and March dealing with industry and

**SECRET**

**agriculture noted above, the shift toward more prudent policies in each justified by Chairman Mao**

25X1

The rationale for this general retreat, as set forth in these and an accompanying March Red Flag editorial (entitled "On Summing Up Experience") was two-fold. The responsibility for failure could not, of course, be assigned to Mao's radical programs, but rather to "leading comrades at all levels" who had failed to understand "Chairman Mao's basic ideas...and integrate them with specific conditions in each department and unit."

In addition to being held responsible for the defeats and shortcomings of the "struggle-criticism-transformation" movement in their own localities, these "leading comrades" were also blamed for not providing the Central Committee with examples of "typical advanced experience" in the "struggle-criticism-transformation" movement, examples presumably of "things of an advanced socialist nature" which "the creativeness and wisdom of the revolutionary masses" (to quote the 1969 New Year's Day editorial) were expected to produce in this concluding stage of the Cultural Revolution. Unless such "typical examples...on the industrial and agricultural fronts and in the educational revolution" were "reported in good time," it would not be possible (as the March Red Flag editorial put it) for the Central Committee to "have the initiative in leading this movement." It was on this somber note, then, that the long-awaited Ninth Party Congress convened on 1 April 1969.

**SECRET****The Ninth Party Congress**

"From the opening of the Ninth National Congress to . . . [its] conclusion . . . , Chairman Mao consistently issued a call of great significance: 'Unite and strive for still greater victories.' This call, which has generally outlined the basic spirit of the Ninth National Congress, is a strategic plan of Chairman Mao." --Joint People's Daily, Red Flag, Liberation Army Daily Editorial, "Hold Aloft the Banner of Unity of the Ninth National Congress and Strive for Still Greater Victories," June 9, 1969.

For those who looked to the Ninth Party Congress to provide answers to basic questions about the recent past and future of Chinese politics, this first national congress of the Chinese Communist Party to be held in eleven years was a major disappointment. Whether viewed in terms of the new Party leadership, the new Party structure or the course of future political and economic policy, the published record of the Congress (three communiques, Lin Piao's political report and the text of the new Party Constitution) was generally vague and contradictory. In view of the ambiguous character of the evidence, one's view of developments at the Congress is bound to be colored by one's view of developments preceding the Congress, indeed by one's view of the Cultural Revolution as a whole.

Lin Piao's political report to the some 1500 delegates attending the Congress seemed designed in large part to dispel some erroneous views of the Cultural Revolution which were apparently widely held in China. Developing the theme which Mao had introduced at the Twelfth Plenum the preceding October, Lin's report was largely a retrospective review of the Cultural Revolution justified as "absolutely necessary and most timely for consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat, preventing capitalist restoration and building socialism." Although hailed in the 14 April press communique as "a great program guiding China's socialist revolution and construction," Lin's

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

report, characterized by retrospection, abstraction and defensiveness, was anything but that.

Organization of the Congress appears to have been controlled from the top. As Hsieh Fu-chih had revealed in a speech in October 1967, the plan was to organize the Congress "from the top downward" by having the Party Center select those who would attend. Although there is some evidence of uncertainty and disagreement in the precongress deliberations of the top leadership, the proceedings of this Congress appear also to have been controlled from above, in particular the method of "electing" the members of the Presidium and new Central Committee by the Congress and of the Politburo and its Standing Committee by the first plenary session of the Ninth Central Committee held immediately after the Congress adjourned.

It is interesting to note in this connection that an apparently deliberate attempt was made to mislead foreigners concerning the nature of this "election" process by substituting the term "elected" in the translation of the final draft of the new Party constitution for the term "produced" which had appeared in the original draft of the new Party constitution. In fact, the Chinese in the final version remains "produced," reflecting the strong disdain for electoral processes expressed in the 15 October 1968 Red Flag editorial on Party rectification which had both "criticized and repudiated the formalism of blind faith in elections" and had stipulated that both Party and Revolutionary Committees should be "established not by elections, but by relying directly upon the action of the great numbers of revolutionary people."

More important than these considerations in appraising the new Party organs is the character of the men selected to lead them. The selection of Mao as Chairman and Lin as Vice Chairman as the only two officers to head the Central Committee, together with the new practice of listing other Politburo members by stroke-order, was clearly designed to underline the primacy of these two top leaders, with Lin Piao now officially enshrined in the new Party constitution as "Comrade Mao Tse-tung's close comrade-in-arms and successor." The composition of the Politburo Standing Committee, by far the most important Party organ, demonstrates graphically the continued domination of the top Party leadership by Maoist radicals. Consisting of just five men (Mao, Lin, Chou En-lai, Ch'en Po-ta, and K'ang Sheng), this Standing Com-

**SECRET**

mittee is similar to the one formed at the outset of the Cultural Revolution at the Eleventh Plenum in August 1966, and, in its composition, places control over the conduct of the Party's daily and most important affairs in the hands of militant Maoists by a margin of four to one.

Less clear cut and therefore susceptible to divergent interpretation is the character of the full 25-member Politburo "elected" on 28 April at the first plenary session of the new Central Committee. It is possible to conclude, for example, that the most important characteristic of this new Politburo is the greater representation accorded the People's Liberation Army (12 of the 25, including Lin Piao and his wife) compared either with the previous Politburo or the list of 14 who had comprised the de facto leadership of the regime since mid-1968. According to this view, it would follow then that this increase in military representation signifies a shift in the balance of power in the Politburo in favor of proponents of relative "moderation" in domestic and foreign policy.

It is important to note, however, that two of the ten military representatives (in addition to Lin and his wife) are superannuated and inactive veterans of the Red Army (Chu Teh and Liu Po-cheng) and that four more are military men of a very special type. These four (Chief of Staff Huang Yung-sheng, Commander of the Air Force Wu Fa-hsien, Director of the Rear Services Department Chiu Hui-tso and Navy First Political Commissar Li Tso-peng) have all been closely associated with Lin Piao for a number of years, have all survived Red Guard attack by inter alia making "self-criticisms," and have all played key political roles in the Cultural Revolution. When it is further noted that the two military region commanders (Hsu Shih-yu and Ch'en Hsi-lien) named to the Politburo have also been linked with Lin Piao and also have survived the "test" of Red Guard denunciation by "self-criticism" and protracted sessions of "Mao-study" in Peking, it appears that an equally tenable interpretation of the addition of these military leaders to the Politburo is that they reflect an expansion in the power and influence of Lin Piao in this leading Party organ.

**SECRET**

An even more difficult question is judging the political complexion of the new, much larger Central Committee "elected" at the Congress. In general, the composition of the Ninth Central Committee suggests a conscious effort to apply the "three way alliance" principle underlying the Revolutionary Committee structure at provincial and lower levels of government to the Party structure at the center. Employing a criterion of primary association, the 279 full and alternate members of the new Central Committee consist of (1) representatives of the PLA, about 40 percent; (2) representatives of "revolutionary cadres," about 30 percent; and (3) representatives of the "revolutionary masses," also about 30 percent. In addition to the preponderant share of the PLA, the dominant proportion (well over 50 percent) of regional representation (both from provincial Revolutionary Committees and the Military Regions and Districts) is another important feature of the new Central Committee worth noting.

The crucial question in judging the political complexion of the new Central Committee, then, concerns the character of these military leaders who already dominate the provincial Revolutionary Committee structure and who now have been assigned a major role in the Party leadership. On this point the evidence is also mixed and does not support a clear-cut judgment. At the outset of the Cultural Revolution, Mao had called upon the PLA (in his famous 7 May 1966 directive) to become proficient in "politics, military affairs and culture," to engage in industry and agriculture, to "participate in each struggle of the cultural revolution" and in this way come "to play a very great role indeed." But this role was clearly secondary to that of the Red Guards in the early stages of the Cultural Revolution, and there is reason to believe that Mao was reluctant in January 1967 to order the PLA to intervene formally in the revolution, an order which soon led the Army to carry out most of the functions previously exercised by the Party and government at provincial and local levels.

There is convincing proof, moreover, of Mao's and Lin's dissatisfaction with the initial performance of the PLA as the de facto government in the fact that roughly

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

half of the Military Region and Military District Commands were subsequently purged and reorganized. Even after this large-scale reorganization and the selection of new military commanders to positions of leadership in the new provincial Revolutionary Committee structure, the performance of a number of these replacements was subjected to severe criticism in the anti-Rightist campaign spearheaded by Madame Mao in the spring of 1968. These military commanders, however characterized, could hardly meet the criteria laid down by Lin Piao (in his Eleventh Plenum speech of August 1966) for the selection of new Party leaders--that they eagerly studied the thought of Mao Tsetung, attached great importance to political-ideological work and were filled with revolutionary zeal.

On the other hand, the PLA has discharged its role as the main executer of policy during the Cultural Revolution and as the whipping-boy for problems resulting from that policy with remarkable discipline and obedience. With the possible exception of the Wuhan Incident, there is no known instance of local military commanders directly defying orders from Peking, orders which frequently resulted in subjecting them to physical attack and humiliating abuse at the hands of the Red Guards. When mistakes have been made, they have either been mistakes of omission (e.g., failure to identify and support the "revolutionary Left") or the result of a natural tendency to interpret ambiguous directives so as to minimize disorder and safeguard their own positions. Whatever the case, those local military commanders who have survived have accepted responsibility for these mistakes by engaging in "self-criticism." On balance, then, it appears that these military leaders at the regional and provincial levels to whom important Party and government functions have been assigned, should be characterized as essentially loyal to Mao.

It is important to note, moreover, that it was the Army which implemented the radical and disruptive social and economic programs inaugurated on an experimental basis in the fall of 1968. Indeed, as authoritative editorials in February and March of 1969 implied, the local military had been too zealous in promoting these programs, resorting to coercion rather than persuasion when confronted by

**SECRET**

opposition to these radical reforms. By contrast, "veteran cadres" were cited as "generally having richer experience and a better understanding of the importance of the Party's policies" and it was in order to make more of these available that Mao's "mild" cadre policy (as formulated, for example, in the 1969 New Year's Day editorial) of "educating and uniting the overwhelming majority of...cadres" was revived.

In addition to a continuing campaign to "liberate" more experienced and expert "veteran cadres," there has been a continuing effort to increase the representation of "new cadres"--the representatives of revolutionary mass organizations--on the Revolutionary Committees at provincial and local levels. The revival of these mass organizations, which had supposedly been dissolved in late summer 1968, to a position of some power and influence is one of the most intriguing developments in the post-Congress period. Justified as necessary to "unite the overwhelming majority of the people," the decision by Peking to reinstate radical Red Guards to positions of leadership in a number of provinces (e.g., Kwangtung and Chekiang) will also serve to strengthen civilian representation at the expense of the PLA at provincial and local levels of government and provide these Red Guard leaders with still another chance to qualify as "revolutionary successors."

In spite of the dominant theme of "unity" the net effect of the Ninth Party Congress apparently was to produce further disunity. By insisting on retaining the three-way alliance organizational form of the Revolutionary Committee, Mao is attempting to build a new power structure which is inherently unstable. Representing disparate groups with widely differing interests, the three components of the leadership of these new organs of power are also expected to perform differing roles, with the PLA responsible for maintaining order, the old cadres charged with providing administrative expertise, and the new cadres assigned such important tasks as maintaining contact with the masses, promoting revolutionary enthusiasm and, presumably, serving as revolutionary watchdogs to check and

**SECRET**

report on the performance of the military and veteran cadres to Peking. It is not surprising that following the Congress the Chinese provincial press was filled with reports of continuing "disunity" and, a new phenomenon, of "paralysis" within the leadership of these Revolutionary Committees.

If there was uncertainty about the character of the new leadership and the nature of the new structure of power emerging after the Ninth Party Congress, there was also uncertainty about the course of future political and economic policy as discussed by Lin Piao in his political report to the Congress. The new stage of "carrying out the tasks of struggle-criticism-transformation conscientiously" begun in September 1968 had been modified by a new set of Mao instructions issued in early 1969, all directed toward slackening the pace and restoring minimum levels of economic, social and political stability in the name of "unity." These instructions were now codified and presented by Lin as a series of "party policies" concerning the intellectuals (to be "re-educated"), cadres (to be "liberated" but only if properly repentant), the "class struggle" (be both "lenient" and "severe" toward "class enemies") and the economy ("grasp revolution and promote production"). As Lin put it, "the main question at present is to carry [these policies] out to the letter."

Presented with these vague and contradictory instructions, the newly established Revolutionary Committees were then ordered to apply them in every factory, school, commune and all other basic units in society "in a deep-going, meticulous, down to earth and appropriate way," or, as Lin later put it, in accordance with "the specific conditions of the unit concerned." The dilemma of the Revolutionary Committee leadership held responsible for solving problems by means of "the living study and application of Mao Tse-tung thought" was two-fold. First was the undeniable fact that, as one provincial press commentary put it, "it requires time and effort for one to fully understand Chairman Mao's instructions." Much more difficult than this, however, was the task of "applying" these instructions in the light of actual conditions in one's own department or unit; that is, "educating the

**SECRET**

**masses in policy and translating the Party's policy into the conscious action of the masses."**

More specifically, how should the Revolutionary Committee leadership act, as the problem was posed in a Shanghai editorial not long before the Congress, "when faced with certain opinions or actions of the masses which do not conform with the Party's policies?" Since it was taken on faith, as this same editorial went on to point out, that "the masses support the Party's policies," any such appearance of conflict could only result from "errors" by the leadership, either in understanding or applying the policy in question.

A common reaction of local leadership cadres, then, was to be "hesitant" and "fearful" and take refuge in silence when the masses "disagreed" with "Party policy." Lacking clear policy directives from above, rent by the differing viewpoints of the three disparate components of the three-way alliance, and confronted by the resistance of the masses to Mao's radical social and economic programs, it is no wonder that the performance of Mao's new revolutionary organ of power--the Revolutionary Committee--was characterized in the spring and early summer of 1969 by instability, disunity and a general paralysis of leadership.

**Prospects**

"The great proletarian cultural revolution is not yet over. There are still many tasks to be completed."--Shanghai Wen Hui Pao Editorial, "A New Fighting Mobilization Order," May 17, 1969.

Despite the general impression of uncertainty conveyed by the published record of the Ninth Party Congress, there is good reason to believe, as indicated by the Wen Hui Pao editorial cited above, that the Maoist leadership intends to persevere in the face of great odds toward the achievement of the original goals of the Cul-

**SECRET**

tural Revolution. An appraisal of progress to date in achieving these goals demonstrates that there is a considerable distance to go--that, in fact, "there are still many tasks to be completed."

Progress toward the first goal--that of "smashing revisionism"--has been most notable, at least in a temporary sense. In this initial, destructive phase of the Cultural Revolution, Mao has largely succeeded in eliminating his opposition by destroying or radically modifying those institutions charged with breeding "revisionism"--the Party and government bureaucracy, the bourgeois-dominated educational system and, to a lesser extent, the whole fabric of urban society held responsible for corrupting the moral and spiritual life of the Chinese people. Although temporarily successful, the very nature of this undertaking would appear to be self-defeating, if for no other reason than that the political, educational and social institutions of the new Maoist revolutionary order will in time harden into a new Establishment.

Progress toward the second, related and even more ambitious goal of the Cultural Revolution--that of changing the very nature of Chinese man by means of a political indoctrination campaign of unprecedented intensity and magnitude--has been much less notable. Having "destroyed 'the palaces of hell-rulers'" (as Lin Piao put it in his political report to the Congress) who in the past had "blocked Chairman Mao's instructions," it was now possible for all of the 700 million Chinese people to "hear Chairman Mao's voice directly," a momentous development which Lin went on to characterize as "the most significant achievement of the great proletarian cultural revolution." But, as suggested by the negative response of the "revolutionary masses" to the first attempt in the winter of 1968-1969 to revive some of the radical features of the Great Leap Forward and commune programs, this view of the Chinese people as willing and eager to subordinate self in order to promote Mao's visionary aims appears to be erroneous. Indeed, this postulate of an identity of interest between Mao and the Chinese people as a whole appears to a basic fallacy which sooner or later will destroy the Cultural Revolution.

**SECRET**

Progress toward the third goal enumerated by Lin Piao in his political report--"strengthening and consolidating the economic base of socialism"--has been minimal, and, in fact, the effort so far to realize Mao's visionary plan for accelerated economic development has probably been counterproductive. This plan, as already noted, embodies features of the earlier Great Leap Forward (the emphasis on manpower and political enthusiasm in place of capital and material incentives) and commune (the building of large-scale, self-supporting and publicly owned economic and social units in the countryside) programs. At the same time, a number of its features can be traced to Mao's famous 7 May 1966 directive, particularly its goals of redirecting material and human resources to the countryside and of creating an omni-competent, all-purpose Chinese man and thus eliminating (a long-term Maoist goal) the three great differences between town and country, industry and agriculture, and mental and physical labor. Although the current moderate trend in economic policy indicates an awareness of practical difficulties, there is no reason to believe that Mao has abandoned the pursuit of his basic vision for the construction of a selfless, egalitarian, authentic Communist society in China.

The undertaking to achieve the fourth and final goal--the search for "revolutionary successors"--has in some ways been the most frustrating and least successful of all. At the very top, Lin Piao of course is now in place as Mao's successor, but there is considerable doubt both about Lin's health and his ability to endure after Mao is gone. As noted above, the Politburo is also weighted with hand-picked supporters, but few if any of these are both talented and youthful enough to take over when the present generation goes. It is at provincial and lower levels, however, where the failure to identify and promote to positions of leadership Mao's "revolutionary Leftist" supporters has been most apparent.

This more than any other reason explains why the program of Party rectification and building under way for more than two years has achieved so little. Despite the

**SECRET**

flurry of activity at the Center (two Central Committee plenums and a National Congress between October 1968 and April 1969), the Party has yet to assume its assigned role of leadership within the provincial Revolutionary Committee system, nor, with one or two exceptions has it done so at basic levels of society. The primary cause for this snail's pace in Party building appears to be a continuing fear by the Maoist leadership in Peking of a "restoration of the old," of a revival of the pre-Cultural Revolution "bureaucratic" Party apparatus staffed by the same unrepentant and unredeemed cadres. Until such time as sufficient "new blood" ("new cadres") is brought into the leadership, it appears that the Party will continue to lead a shadowy, ghost-like existence at provincial and local levels of the new structure of power.

These, then, are some of the "many tasks" of the Cultural Revolution which remain "to be completed." To the extent that they embody visionary aims, they can of course never be completed. But it would be a misreading both of the man himself and of the revolution which is so distinctively his to think that Mao Tse-tung will abandon the pursuit of these chimerical goals. As long as Mao Tse-tung continues to dominate his Party and people, the Cultural Revolution will continue, although perhaps under a new name, in Communist China.

-41-  
**SECRET**